

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 were presented for examination. Claims 1-4 and 16 were allowed. Claims 5-15, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101; the Examiner asserts that these claims are directed to non-statutory subject matter. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are allowable. Accordingly, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. **If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues, or believes that some or all of the claims are not in condition for allowance, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned to schedule a telephone Examiner Interview before any further actions on the merits.**

The applicants will now address each of the issues raised in the outstanding Office Action.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 5-15, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the Examiner alleges that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without acquiescing in this rejection, since these claims have been canceled this ground of rejection is rendered moot. The cancellation of these claims is without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter of the claims. Thus, the applicants reserve their right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims, such as in a continuation application for example.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

June 10, 2004



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June 10, 2004
Date